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Fluorid.

TWO MITE:  
OR,  
A GRATEFULL  
ACKNOWLEDGMENT  
OF  
God's Singular Goodnesse.

Running  
headline  
of 726

In two Sermons  
Preached by NATHANAELL HARDY,  
Master of Arts, and Minister of the Gospel, in  
S. Dionis Back Church Aug: 7 and 14 1653.  
Occasioned by his late unexpected Re-  
covery of a desperate Sicknes.

ISA. 38. 17, 18, 19.

*Behold for Peace, I had great bitterness, but thou hast in love to my soule, de-  
livered it from the pit of corruption, for thou hast cast all my sinnes behinde  
thy back.*

*For the grave cannot praise thee, death cannot celebrate thee, they that go downe  
into the pit cannot hope for thy truth.*

*The living, The living, he shall praise thee, as I doe this day.*

AUG. Ep. 77. ad AUREL:

*Nam quid melius & animo geramus, & ore promamus, & calamo exprimamus,  
quam Deo gratias, hoc nec dici brevius, nec audiri latius, nec intelligi gratius,  
nec agi fructuosius potest.*

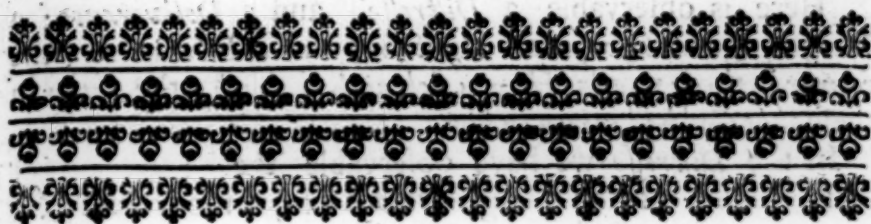
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The first of these is the fact that the  
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Phil. 2. 27. the former part.

*For indeed he was sick, nigh unto death,  
but God had mercy on him.*



If you please to peruse the five last Psalms of David, you shall finde them beginning and ending with an Hallelujah: Praise ye the Lord, being the Alpha and Omega, the Prora and the Puppis, the first and the last words of each. Not much unlike is Saint Pauls practise in the Epistle to the Romans, who almost in the very en-

1:8:11:16:24:  
Rom. 1:16,

trance placeth an *ευχαριστω*, I thanke my God through Iesus Christ, and closeth with a *θεω δοξα*, To God onely wise bee glorie through Iesus Christ. In imitation of these patternes I shall place Thanksgiving, both in the Front and Reere of my Discourse. Indeed what fitter Proœmium to a gratulatorie Sermon than a *Benedictus*? Blessed therefore be God, who kept his unworthie Servant from falling into the Grave, a Land of Silence and Forgetfulnesse, and hath now vouchsafed him the libertie of entring into his House, the place of Prayers and Prayses. Blessed be God, who hath brought my feet from lying in a sick bed to stand in this holy Mount. Finally blessed be God, who hath given me a joyfull occasion of handling, and just cause of applying this Scripture to my selfe, by changing the third Person unto the first; For indeed I was sick nigh to death, but God had mercy on me.

This Text naturally spreadeth forth it selfe into two maine  
B boughes,

boughs, each of which have three branches sprouting from them.

Here is observable a *Distresse*, and a *Deliverance*; a *Danger*, and an *Escape*, an *Affliction*, and a *Liberation*: the former in those words, *He was sick nigh to death*; the latter in these, *but God had mercy on him*.

In the *Distresse* we have observable, the

1. *Quality* of the *Danger* what it was, in the word *Sick*.
2. *Extremity* of the *Measure*, how great it was, in those words *nigh unto death*.
3. *Eminency* of the *Person*, whom it befell, in the relative *hee*.

In the *Deliverance* we have considerable, the

1. *Efficiency* of the *Author*, by whom it was conferred, in the Word *God*.
2. The *excellency* of the *Benefit*, how expressed, in those words *had mercy on him*.
3. The *opportunity* of the *Time*, when vouchsafed, in the expressive *but*.

These are the severall *Branches* of this *Sacred Tree*, into which I have *climbed* by the *Ladder* of *humane* industry, from which by the *hand* of *Divine* assistance I have *gathered*, and by the same *hand* shall now *scatter* among you such *Fruit* as hath refreshed my *owne*, and (I hope through *Gods* blessing) will nourish your *soules*; and so I begin with the

Gen. I.

*Distresse*, *He was sick nigh to death*; and therein the quality of the *danger* in that word *sick*.

The *Philosopher*, observing the *property* of mans *constitution*, describeth him by *risibile*, to be a reasonable living *Creature*, that hath the onely power of *laughing*; but the *Divine* considering the *misery* of mans *condition* no lesse, aptly characterizeth him by *fleBILE*, an unfortunate wretch, that hath the most cause of *weeping*: In this respect it is not unfitly taken notice of, how the new-born *Babe* commeth into the world crying, as if by the *language* of its present *tears*, it would foretell the sadnesse of its future *sorrows*.

Vagilug; loom  
lugubri complet  
ut aequum' st, cui  
tantum in vitâ  
restat transire  
malorum. Lucr.

Among those many *evils* with which the *life* of man is beset, this of *sickness* is one.

Aug. in Pl. III

One to which all are subject, quis non agrotat in hac vitâ?  
quis



*quis languorem non experitur ? nasci in hoc corpore mortali incipere agrotare est : Who in this life doth not more or lesse taste of sicknesse ? yea from the Cradle to the Crutch, Birth to Death, Wombe to the Tombe, we are continually liable to it.*

*One of which we may say, as Leah of Gad, A Troop cometh, and to which that Devils name in the Gospel may fitly be applyed Legion : The Poet instancing in one kind of disease, speaketh of a band of Feavers,*

*Nova febrim,*

*Horat. od. 3.*

*Terris incubuit cohors :*

*And Galen reckoning up the diseases to which one part of mans body, the eye is subject ; numbred 112. how great an Army then must this Commander have, who begirteth this Castle of the Body in every part and corner, and that with severall Souldiers ! No wonder if the holy tongue, as it calleth men מיתים which signifieth dying men, because they are continually under the power of death, so it styles them חננים sickly men, because they are exposed to such variety of sicknesses.*

*Finally one which exceedeth all those other miseries of this present life, what dissention is in a City, discord in a Family, surfetting to the Stomach, ignorance to the Minde, that is sicknesse to the Body, disturbing and oppressing it ; yea, it is the worst evill of cold, hunger, and nakednesse, of heat, thirst, and warmnes, that they hasten upon us sicknesse and death.*

*That I may the better open this distresse, give me leave to delineate it both in the effects that flow from it, and the cause from which it floweth.*

*There are two grievous attendants which sicknesse commonly bringeth along with her, namely paine and weaknesse ; by paine it taketh away the comfort of all enjoyments, even of life it selfe ; Barzillai being old, said to the King, Can thy Servant taste what I eat, or what I drink ? Can I heare any more the voice of singing men, and singing women ? wherefore should thy servant be a burden to my Lord the King ? Not much unlike may it be said of the sick man, Can he eat, or can he drinke ? Can musick, or any other pleasures then delight him,*

when he is a burthen to himselfe? And as by reason of paine, it renderth life uncomfortable, so by reason of weaknesse, unserviceable, disenabling the body from the performance of any work: Alas, how can the Clock go when the Weights are plucked off? or the Watch move right, when the Wheels are out of order?

Both these sad effects are fitly expressed by two words, the one in the Hebrew, the other in the Greek tongue, and it is the word which our Apostle here useth. The Hebrew word-- שָׁחַב signifieth both *doluit* and *agrotavit*, to be sick, and to be sorry: well are they expressed by one word, since they commonly go together, both smarting paine in the Body, and dolorous anguish in the Mind being caused by sicknesse; in this respect the English word *disease*, is very apposite, because it diseaseth and disturbeth the person; of this David complained in his sicknesse, when he saith, *My bones are vexed, and my soule is also sore vexed.* The Greek word ἀσθενω implyeth both *agrotari*, and *imbecillem esse*, to be sick, and to be weak, and therefore the Noun of this Verbe is elsewhere rendred *infirmity*: this inconvenience likewise David found by his *disease*, when he said, *I am feeble, and sore broken; weaknes* being the inseparable concomitant of *sicknes*.

Psal. 6. 2, 3.

Luko: 13: 11

Mat. 9: 17

Psal. 38. 8.

Quando hac  
iam grandia  
facies vicino  
jam exitu, etiam  
a medicorum  
actione exclusus  
fatiscens jam  
corpore ubi ex-  
cebit distri-  
ctio officium cen-  
sor animus  
Salv. ad Eccl.  
Cathol. l. 1.  
Iam. 5.

Langhorn's fun.  
Serm. of Mrs  
Mary Swaine.

*Meditations*, which (*I would to God*) were more deeply imprinted on the mindes of men, those especially, who put off their repentance, and the working out of their salvation till a sick bed, as if when they are in pain, they could repent with the more ease, or when they are weakest, they were strong enough for this work: Alas, doe you not know how unfit such a time is for any, but much more a religious employment? This no doubt is one reason why Saint James, who in other afflictions adviseth men to pray for themselves, in sicknesse counselleth them to call for the Elders of the Church to pray over them, because then for the most part they are unable to pray themselves: in this respect it was (as I have read) the saying of a vertuous Gentlewoman upon her sick bed, *Let none defer their preparation nor their prayers unto the bed of their sicknesse, for then the minde is too much troubled with grief of body to be employed, as they ought, in spiritual exercise. Tell me, whoever thou art that delayest till this time, how knowest thou, but such a sickness may seize upon thee*

thee as in a moment, may take away thy life? or if not, be-  
reave thee of thy senses? or it may be so painfull, that it is all  
thou canst do to wrestle with the paine; nay, let me tell thee,  
for the most part such procrastinators, when that time com-  
meth, either repent not at all in their sicknesse, or it proveth  
but a sickly repentance. Oh then (my Brethren!) be wise  
in time, doe not lay the greatest load on the feeblest horse,  
put not the weakest servant to the hardest labour, put not  
off the maine businesse of thy soules health to the dolefull time  
of thy bodies sicknesse.

You have heard what sicknesse doth, or rather undoeth; it  
would not be amisse to enquire whence it came, and how it was  
brought into the world. Indeed (as Christ saith in another  
case) it was not so from the beginning. Man in innocency was  
created with a body of so equall and lasting a temperature, that  
(had he not sinned) it had neither been taken downe by death,  
nor put out of frame by sicknesse. Sinne it is which is fons Ma-  
li, morbi, mortis, hath brought in evill instead of good, death of  
life, and sicknesse of health. The Physitian being asked the  
cause of Diseases, answereth, and most truly, mali humores,  
evill humors in the body. But the Divine resolveth it more  
fully, mali mores, ill manners in the life. Phylosophy teacheth,  
and Experience confirmeth it, that passiones anima sequuntur  
temperamentum corporis, the mindes passions much follow the  
bodies temper. Divinity preacheth no lesse truly, that the dis-  
order of the body followeth upon the distemper of the minde;  
Mans soule was first sick of sinne, and so the body becommeth  
infected with sicknesse for sinne. It was the first sinne of Adam  
which brought forth, and it is our owne actuall sinnes that  
nourish this degenerate Brat, wherewith mankind is so mise-  
rably infested.

A Meditation, which (if well pondered) would learne us to  
beare sicknesse whensoever it cometh upon us without mur-  
muring, and yet with mourning.

1. Why shouldst thou repine at God when any disease seizeth  
one thee? True, he is the efficient, but thou art the meritori-  
ous cause; he inflicteth, but it is sinne that deserveth; he puni-  
sheth, but it is not till thou hast provoked him, blame not his

Quia deus non  
irridetur, ipse  
se decipit qui  
mortem multis  
temporibus vixit  
& ad quaren-  
dan vitam se-  
mivivus assurgit  
& tunc offici-  
o, na apparet  
quando domini-  
ca servituti  
omnia corporis  
& anima sub-  
trahuntur officia.  
Fault. Epist.  
prima.  
Mat. 19. 8.  
Cum omnes ho-  
mines velint per-  
vitentiam in fine  
vitae suae ac-  
cipere, vix pau-  
cos videmus eam  
secundum quod  
desiderant adi-  
pisci. Elig. de  
can. dom; bom.  
sext.



nostrum au-  
tores sumus.  
Salv. de Gub. l. 8  
a Deo punimur  
sed ipsi facimus  
ut puniamur.  
id ibid.  
Jerem. 4. 18.

Gr. Naz Epist  
70.

Mortem omni  
etati commu-  
nem esse sentio.  
Cic. de Senect.  
tunc trepidamus  
cum propè a vo-  
bis credimus esse  
mortem, a quo  
propè non est  
parata omnibus  
loca omnibus-  
que nominis.  
Sen Epist 30.  
Tres sunt nun-  
tii mortis, casus,  
infirmas, se-  
nectus, casus  
nuntiat mortem  
lascivam, infirmas appo-  
nens, senectus prae-  
sensem. Hugo de S. viii. de claus. ad.

justice, but thank thy owne wickednesse, the Mosh that frets the garment is bred of it; the Tree giveth life to that Worme which killeth it. Thy sicknesse, oh man, is of thy selfe, and thy owne wayes and doings are they which procure these things to thee.

2. When sicknesse smiteth thy body, let repentance smite thy thigh; when the disease rageth in thy members, let thy soule be angry at thy sinne, and as thou complaine of the effect, so labor to be sensible of the cause:  $\nu\omicron\sigma\theta\ \tau\alpha\iota\sigma\tau\alpha\gamma\omega\gamma\iota\alpha\ \tau\epsilon\gamma\epsilon\iota\ \tau\omicron\ \sigma\upsilon\mu\phi\epsilon\epsilon\sigma\iota\varsigma$  saith the Divine excellently, sicknes is an wholesome Discipline, it is so when it teacheth us to know our folly. Happy disease which openeth our eyes at once to see, and weep for our sinnes; Oh my soule, it is sinne hath caused thy body to feele sicknesse, let sicknesse cause thee to feele the weight of sinne; it is wickednesse hath brought this weaknesse, let this weaknesse bring thee to a sight and sense of thy wickednesse, why shouldst thou hold that sword in thy hand, which hath so sorely wounded it? or hug that serpent in thy bosome, which hath so painfully stung thee? rather since the fruit is so bitter, pluck up the root, and let not sin reigne any longer in thy mortal body seeing it hath made thy body so mortal. And so much for the quality of the danger: I pass on to the Extremity of the measure, nigh unto death.

It is that, which in some sense is true of every man alive, this world is a region of Ghosts, dying men, yea, young men in the prime of their dayes, strong men in the full vigour of their age, are nigh to death, because death may then be neer to them. The Philosopher being ask'd what he thought of life, turn'd him round and vanished out of sight, thereby intimating, how easily and speedily life may be taken away: and some of them have no lesse truly than aptly represented the distance between life and death by *oculus, apertus* and *clausus*, an eye open and shut, which is done in a moment. But though this in some respect be verified of all men, yet it is more especially true of two sorts of persons, to wit, old men, and sick men, since old age is  $\nu\omicron\sigma\theta\ \phi\upsilon\sigma\iota\kappa\eta$  a naturall disease, and a disease is  $\gamma\upsilon\gamma\epsilon\alpha\varsigma\ \epsilon\iota\sigma\tau\iota\pi\lambda\iota\tau\omicron\upsilon\varsigma$  an accidentall old age, both must needs tend and hasten to death.



As for old men, they are so nigh to death, that the Proverbe *Nibil habet* faith, they have one foot in the grave, young men may dye soon, *quod speret* but they cannot live long; the dimnesse of light in their eyes, *quem senectus* and vapours that sometimes are drawne up into their braines, *ducit ad mortem* Sen. Ep. 30 argue the Sun of their life to be setting, the hoary frost, or *Quemadmodum* rather white snow upon their heads, proclaimes that the winter *senectus* of their deaths is approaching. The more strange it is to see *scensiam si qui-* them dotting on, who are going out of the world, and as if they *tur, ita mors se-* could set up under ground, their mindes are most earthly whilest *ne autem, il: ibid* their bodies are ready to drop into the earth: the more sad it *pedetentim mo-* is to think how both unwilling and unfit they are to die, who *rior dixit Ale-* yet are so unlikely to live; and as if with the Eagle they could *xix senex lenie* renew their youth, they flatter themselves in hope of life, when *insedens.* yet they are as it were within sight of death; how short are *Chiron me mo-* such men of that heathen Seneca, who said of himselfe, *ordi dixit* *Dæmonax senex* *pro cane, immu-* *ens senectutem* *morti vicinam,* *Erasm. Apoth.* *1 6. & 8.*

As old men, be they never so well, so sick men, by they never so young, are nigh to death; what Anacharsis said of Sea-men, that he knew not whether to reckon them among the living or the dead, is no lesse true of sick men, who indeed are not dead, because they breath, and yet not living because not lusty; every man carrieth death in his bosome, but the sick man at his backe, or rather in his armes before his face.

In summe there is a three-fold propinquity of death, possible, probable, certaine; it is possible the healthiest, strongest, and youngest may dye quickly; it is certaine old men (though they out-live far younger) cannot live long; and it is probable that the sick mans death is at hand.

But yet this in the proper sense is not true of all sicknesses, that distinction of sinne cannot hold in Divinity, according to the Popish acception, that some are veniall, others mortall, since S. Paul saith indefinitely, and meaneth it uiniversally, that death is the wages of sin, but Analogically it is true in Physick of diseases; some are onely painfull, others mortall, the Gout in the Toe, a pain in the Teeth, a prick in the Finger; these, though they cause pain, yet are not in their owne nature dead-

ly, Diog laert. l. 1.

ly, nor is the patient accounted the neerer death for them.

Besides, of mortall diseases there is a difference, some are a long time untwisting, others in a short time cut asunder the thread of life: thus the Dropsie is a great while in drowning, the Palsie in shaking downe, and the Consumption in drying up the body, whilest the Feaver in a few dayes burneth, and an Apoplexie, or Aposteme in a few houres suffocate it.

And yet once more in violent diseases, there is a difference, we do not say of every man whom a Feaver smiteth, that he is presently nigh to death; whilest the body is vigorous, the Physick prosperous, we account the patient hopefull; but those, in whom the virulency of the disease so farre prevaleth, as that both the strength of Nature, & skill of Art seem unable to grapple with it, are only and justly looked upon as nigh to death.

Such, no doubt, was Epaphroditus his case, for though some conceive this danger might arise from stripes and scourges, which Nero should command to be inflicted on him at Rome, yet it is more rationally and generally concluded, that some violent sicknesse, by reason of a long Jorney, had seized upon him; and though it is likely this good man was not negligent (according as ability and opportunity was afforded) to use meanes, yet the disease did so increase, that as to life his condition was desperate, and therefore S. Paul saith of him he was nigh unto death.

To this low and weake estate is God pleased many times to bring men among others, chiefly for a double end, and that he may minde them of their dissolution, and quicken them in their devotion.

Of all things we are very prone to forget our latter end, and therefore God by sicknesse puts us in minde of it, we are apt to put death farre from us, and therefore by some grievous disease God bringeth us nigh to death; a presumption, we shall not dye yet, maketh us not think of dying at all, and whilest marrow is in our bones, colour in our faces, appetite in our stomachs, strength in our joynts, health in our bodyes, we easily perswade our selves we shall not dye yet; no mervaille, if to fixe our eyes upon the Grave, God chasten us with paine upon our Bed, so that

ἤγγιστον ἔστι  
ἰατρῶν τέχ-  
ναι ἔτι δεσ-  
πια πᾶσα  
περὶ ταυτέ. ἡ.  
C1. Naz. Orat.  
19.  
Forſitan quia  
verberatus est ab  
infidelibus in  
ministerio.  
Anselm. in  
loc. Ch ylost.  
in v. 29.

Humana fruga-  
litas nimia in  
prosperis rebz  
oblivio est.

Qu. Curt. l. 4.  
ἵνα ἡμῶν ὥστι  
τῆς ἀδελείας  
ἡμῶν ὁπομ-  
νήματα.

Greg. Naz.





Dr. Jer. Tay.  
Sermon.

τί ἐστὶν ἐκ  
βαθεῶν ἔκ  
ἀπλῶς φησὶν  
ἐπὶ στόματι,  
ἐδὲ ἐπὶ τῆς  
γλῶττης, ἀλλ'  
ἐπὶ καρδίας,  
τοιαῦται

γὰρ αἰτῶν  
θλιβομένων  
ψυχὰς καὶ ἐν-  
χαί. Chryso.  
in Psal. 129.  
κάμυσσα ψυ-  
χὴ ἐν χυρῇ  
θεῷ. Greg.  
Naz. Orat.

17.

ally of Devotion : Most men will not pray till they must, it is misery, which like *Jonah's fish*, puts them upon humble supplication, who never thought of God under the gourd of Prosperity. In which respect, that *Latine Proverb* was not taken up without just cause, *Qui nescit orare, discat navigare*; he that knoweth not how to pray, let him turne *Mariner* : and no doubt those violent stormes, which make the Seas to roare, will teach him to pray. When those young *Persian gallants* being beaten and pursued by their enemies, came to the River *Strymon*, which was so frozen that their Boats could not launch, and yet it began to thaw, so that they feared the Ice would not beare them, then (though the day before they reviled both God and his providence) most timorously they fall upon their faces, and ardently beg of God that the River might beare them over from their enemyes pursuit. The smart lashes of Gods rod drive them home, and draw them neare to him, who before were farre from him.

The Greekes aptly expresse the declining estate of a Kingdome by *πεσθῆν ἐς γόνυ* falling upon the Knee, and its ruined estate by *πεσθῆν ἐς στόμα* falling upon the Mouth; expressions, which though they principally referre to the condition, yet withall intimate the disposition of men in an afflicted condition, they whose knees in health were like *Elephants*, without joynts, could not, or rather would not bend, in sicknesse fall upon their knees, nay, when nigh to death, fall upon their mouthes in humble adoration and earnest invocation upon God. And for these causes, that men may both looke forward to their end, and upward to their God; he is pleased to bring them downward, almost to the Gates of Death, and Chambers of the Grave.

To end this, let us all make account of, and prepare for straights. In health, expect sicknesse, in sicknesse looke for death, or to be brought nigh to it. Diseases may come unsent for, let them not come unlook'd for; if they happen not, thou art not the worse, and it is labour well lost; if they doe, thou art the better fitted, and it is time well spent. Doe not flatter thy selfe in health, as if the mountaine of thy body were so strong that it could not be moved: Alas, one blast from heaven can-

not



not onely move, but remove, shake, but overturne it, rather even then when thou art fed with fat pastures, cleare waters, thy Table spread, thy Cup full, thy Body hayle, often thinke of walking through the valley of the shadow of death: Happy is that man, whom when sicknesse arresteth, and death approacheth to, can say, and say it truly, *This is no more then what I have looked and provided for all my dayes.* And so much be spoken of the second particular, pass we now to the third. Psal. 23. 4.

3. *Eminency* of the person, whom this extreame disease befell in the relative *He*. If you would know who this *He* was, be pleased to cast your eyes on the 25. verse of the Chapter, where you finde his name to be *Epaphroditus*, one that was not onely a good Man, but a Man of God, not onely a Servant, but a Minister of Christ, and one so eminent, as that Saint Paul dignifies him with the titles of his Brother, and Companion, and fellow-Souldier; and yet of him it is here said that he was nigh unto death. Ver. 25.

Saints as well as sinners, Ministers as well as the People, are liable to desperate diseases. In respect of temporall evils they have no more priviledge than others: And no wonder, since

1. That which is the cause both of sicknesse and death, remaineth in them, to wit, sinne: Indeed the power of sinne is weakened, therefore they cannot be hurt of the second death, but the being of it remaineth, and that necessitateth the first; they are so freed from the guilt of it, that they shall not taste the torments of hell, but yet they may drinke deepe of the miseries of this life: sinne will not leave the best man till it hath brought him to his grave, well may it bring him to his sick bed. Peccatum separans inter nos & Deum penam auferri non potest, donec liberemur a corpore. Bern. de 3. in adv. Serm. 6.

2. In respect of their bodily constitution, they are earthly houses, that will moulder away, till at last they fall: earthen vessels subject to flaws and cracks, till at length they breake. The Saints are the Sonnes of God by grace, but still the Sonnes of Adam by nature, the Ministers are Angels in respect of their office, but still they are Men in regard of their persons, and being of the same mould, and subject to the same dangers with others.

ἡ δὲ δαχόμε-  
ναι τὰς μα-  
θητάς αὐτὸν  
δὲχεται τοῦ  
χέειν, καὶ ὁ  
παιδευτὴν ἐν  
τῇ τοῖς μα-  
θηταῖς χεῖρ  
ἵπνυται.

Oecumen. ib.  
Causa morbi ju-  
it nimia dili-  
gentia in me cu-  
rando, in docen-  
do evangelio, in  
defendendā meā  
causā, in vigiliis  
ieiunio, lucubra-  
tionibus, &c.

Aret. ibid.

τι θαύμασεν  
ἐν κακοπαθεῖ-  
σι καὶ ἁγίοι,  
ἢ τε εἰς κα-  
θάρσιν, ἢ τε  
εἰς βασάνον  
ἀρετῆς καὶ πεί-  
ραν φιλοσοφί-  
ας. Greg.

Naz. Orat.

19.

1 Cor. 11. 30.

2 Cor. 12. 7.

ἢ τε ἀγαθός

τις δὲ χεῖρ

ἀμαρτίας, ἢ τε

κακός τις

χεῖρ δικαι-

οσύνης, ἀμφο-

τέρως δὲ ἀ-

3. More specially, the very calling and employment of Mini-  
sters is such, as exhausteth their spirits, weakeneth their bodies,  
and accelerateth both diseases and death: our Apostle saith of  
Epaphrodit. that for the work of Christ he was nigh to death; v. 30.  
the worke he there meaneth is most probably conceived to be  
the travelling of this good man to Rome, with supplies for  
his wants, (to relieve a Christian, especially a Messenger of  
Christ, is the work of Christ) but it is no lesse true of the worke  
of Christ, which is peculiarly the Ministers, since the pains they  
take in preaching, oft times Christ brings them nigh to death. It  
was said of Archimedes. studiis quibus obtinuit famam amisit vi-  
tam, the studies which got him credit lost his life; and it may  
be said of many Ministers, the fastings, watchings, labours  
preachings, by which they profit the peoples soules, hurt their  
bodies. Thus like the candle they waste themselves that they  
might enlighten, yea, like the salt they dissolve themselves that  
they may season others.

4. Finally, God hath choice and singular ends at which he  
aimeth, when he bringeth his owne Servants or Ministers into  
such desperate sicknesses, and that both, in regard of sinne and  
grace.

1. In regard of their sinnes, that they may be either purged  
or prevented; by which means their sicknesse becomes their  
Physicke, and the Malady it selfe a spirituall remedy. It may  
be they have fallen into some grosse sinne, and therefore they  
fall into some grievous sicknesse: So was it with those unwor-  
thy Communicants, concerning whom Saint Paul saith, for  
which cause many of them were weake, many sick, and some slept.  
It may be God seeth them prone to commit some hainous fault  
which he restraineth them from by some dolorous sicknesse, as  
S. Paul had a prick in his flesh that he might not be puffed up  
in his minde; so God sometimes wounds his Servants bodies, as  
knowing, that otherwise they would have wounded their consci-  
ences.

2. In respect of their graces, that the truth of them may be  
tried, the acts of them renewed, and the strength of them en-  
creased. God hath many wayes to try men, among which sick-  
nesse, especially if dangerous, is a sore tryall, and therefore  
when

when the Devill, by Gods leave had tryed Job in the losse of his Cattell, Servants, and Children, he obtaineth licence to inflict sores upon his body, making this his last (as accounting it his fiercest) onset. Indeed then is the triall of a mans faith, when God seemeth as if he would slay him, of his hope when all things are desperate, of his love when God frowneth upon, nay beateth him, of his patience when the paine is sharp, of his courage when the sorrowes of death compasse him, of his perseverance, when he holds fast his integrity to the death.

To close up this, let it be a lesson of comfort, of charity, and of diligence.

1. Of comfort, when any sicknesse seizeth on thee, remember whose lot it hath been as well as thine, and be not discouraged. When Christ would encourage his Disciples against sufferings, he useth this argument, for so persecuted they the Prophets which were before you: Mat. 5. 12. it is that meditation which may revive us when we are in pain and misery, so it fared with others of Gods faithfull ones before me. That argument of Eliah indeed was somewhat passionate, 1 King. 19. 4. It is enough now, O Lord, take away my life, for I am not better than my Fathers; but it is a pious reasoning for every Christian to say, I am content Lord, if thou take away my health, exercise me with diseases, I am not better than Job, David, Hezekiah, Epaphroditus, and others of thy faithfull Servants and Ministers; who am I, that I should think much to pledge those holy men of God, though in a bitter Cup?

2. Of Charity, and that both to thy selfe and others.

1. Condemne not thy selfe as if God hated thee, because he corrects thee, or as if he were more angry with thee than others, because he chastiseth thee more severely then them. Indeed it is good in a time of sicknesse to reflect upon thy selfe, examine thy wayes, and if conscience accuse of some great misdemeanour, to humble thy selfe, and acknowledge thy disease the just reward of thy offence, but otherwise, do not conclude thy owne guilt or Gods hatred meerely from the premisses of sicknesse, though virulent.

2. Censure not others as if they were therefore the worst of sinners, because in their bodies the greatest sufferers. This is

Quosdam peccans Deum peccare posse, in salutem flagellatos infirmitate corporis, ne peccent: ut eis utilius sis frangi languoribus ad salutem, quam remanere in. o. lumes ad damnationem. Bern. de Int. Dom. cap. 46, Probationes diversae sunt credentium, alina per agnitum, alina amissione barorum, alina per damnum pecuniae probantur. Ambr. in Loc.   
 ὅταν ἀσθενῇ πειρίσῃς ἀνδρῶν ἀν- ἀμνήθητι τῷ σωματι τῷ ἰωβ, καὶ τῆς ἀγίας ἐκείνης σαρκός.   
 Chryl. T. 7. de Morb. & Med.



Aq. 18.4.

Psal. 38.13.

Quam propo-

serum iudicium

eorum qui ex

varis malis, qui-

bus nonnulli

magni viri &amp;

doctores ecclesie

laborare non-

nunquam solent,

finis de illo-

rum doctrina

&amp; salute judi-

care. Zanch in

Loc.

Eccl. 1.9. 2.

Psal. 91.10.

Ver. 9.

(indeed) that *hard* measure which *Gods* people and *Ministers* often meet with: When the *Barbarians* saw a *Viper* upon *Paul's* hand, they presently condemned him as a *murderer*; and *David* complaineth of his *enemies*, that when he was *sick*, they spake *mischievous* things against him: nay *Job's* friends (though good men) were deceived with this *fallacy*, and accuse *Job* of *hypocrisie* because of his *calamity*. And thus it is still, If a *zealous Christian*, or *faithfull Minister* be visited with a *dolefull sicknesse*, his *Religion* must be no better than *Disimulation*, and his *Doctrine* *Heresie*: But surely it is either *Ignorance*, or *Malice*, or both, that filleth mens mouthes with such censures.

It is true, there never was *sicknesse* without *sinne*, but the *sicknesse* is not alwayes proportioned to the *sinne*: these things come alike to all; was the *wise mans* *Observation*, nor doth any *sicknesse* befall any man which may not befall the *best* man. I know some assert a *Saint* to be *Plague-free*, grounding it upon the *Promise* in the *Psalme*, that no *plague* shall come nigh his dwelling: But you must know, this is onely a *temporall* *Promise*, and therefore (as indeed all such) hath a *double* condition annexed unto it. The one *ex parte personæ*, on the *Saints* part, which is to make the *Lord*, even the *most high*, his *habitation*; if then good men, in *pestilentiall* times, through a distrustfull feare, make the *Creatures* their *refuge*, no mervaille if the *plague* infect them and their dwellings. The other *ex parte rei*, in regard of the thing it selfe, which is onely assured so far as it may make for *Gods* glory and his *Peoples* benefit. We read in the former part of the tenth verse there shall no evill befall him, whereby is intimated that the *plague* shall not then come nigh to, when it is evill for a good man, but if at any time *God* see it good, either for the *manifestation* of his owne glory (to wit, of his *justice* in so severely punishing his owne, of his *power* and *mercy* in delivering from so deadly a disease) or for the *spirituall* advantage of his people (in humbling them for some scandalous sinne by so smart a chastisement, in exercising the strength of their patience by so sore a tryall) not the holiest person is in such cases exempted from the *plague*, nor is it improbably conceived that *Job's* botches, *Hezekiah's* boyles



boyles, Davids sores were not much different from, if not altogether the same with the plague, who yet all of them were choice and eminent Saints. Oh then, let us take heed how we lay the load of heavy censure upon the backs of Gods Ministers and Servants.

3. Of diligence, that

1. We who are Ministers, improve the time of our health in feeding the flocks of Christ, since when sickness cometh, we shall be disenabled from our employments: nay perhaps we that have taught others, may then have need to learne our selves.

You who are the People, get all the good you can from us, whilst we are in a capacity of doing good to you, ere long the Candle of our lives may burne dimme by reason of some sickness, yea, be blowne out by death; and then we can no longer give light unto you. Oh therefore walke in the light while you have it, be willing to learne while we are able to teach, account our labours precious, and let them be profitable to you, whilst God maketh us able to bestow them among you, which we shall not be, when that befalls us which did Epaphroditus in the Text, to be sick nigh unto death: And so I have given a dispatch to the first generall, namely the distresse: I now proceed to

2. The deliverance, and therein the

1. Efficiency of the Author, God. Indeed both life and death, health and sickness, are in Gods hand: That of the Poet,

Gen. part.

*Una cademq; manus vulnus opemq; tulit,*

Ovid.

may in this respect be fitly made use of; the same hand of Divine Providence is that which maketh and closeth the wound: He killeth, and maketh alive, he bringeth downe to the grave, and bringeth up, so singeth Hannab. I forme light, and create darkness, I make peace, and create evil, I the Lord doe all these things, is Gods owne saying by the Prophet. Thy head cannot ake without his leave, nor leave aking without his help; but though both are from him, yet with some difference. Of sickness, he is onely the efficient, sinne is the meritorious cause. Of health he is so the efficient, as that his mercy is the impulsiv cause, for which reason perhaps it is here said, God had mercy; that which

1 Sam. 2. 6:

Is. 45. 7.

which moveth him is his pittie, and that which helpeth us is his power.

*sunt aliqua media divina providentia, non propter defectum sue virtutis, sed propter abundantiam sue bonitatis, ut dignitatem causalitatis etiam creaturis communicet.*

Aquin. part 1.  
q. 10, art 3.  
Luk. 4. 38. 7. 10.  
John 5. 8. 9.  
2 Kings 5. 14.  
Isa. 38. 21.  
John 9. 6.

True it is, God is for the most part pleased to make use of meanes in effecting health, but this ariseth from the greatnesse of his goodnesse, not any defect in his Almightynesse, as Aquinas pithily.

That he needeth not meanes, appeareth in as much as he sometimes worketh without any. Such were the Cures Christ wrought upon Peters Wives Mother, the Centurions Servant, and the Impotent Cripple, whom his Word onely restored to health. Nay many times the meanes he useth are improbable, yea, of their owne nature apt to produce a contrary effect. What vertue could there be in the waters of Jordan to cleanse Naamans leprosie? or in the lump of figgs to heale Hezekiah's sores? yea, the Spittle and Clay which Christ made use of, were more likely to put out a seeing, than recover a blinde mans eyes.

He standeth not in need of meanes; but the most probable meanes stand in need of him. It is to put honour on the creature that God vouchsafeth to use it as an instrument; and when the creature becometh an instrument of any good, it is onely as in the hand of God, working with, and by it. For, tell me, when any are recovered, who is it that put the medicinall quality into the drugs which heale them, but the God of Nature? who giveth that wit and skill to man which findeth out their qualities, and accordingly maketh use of them, but the God of Knowledge? Finally, who is it that commands a blessing upon, and giveth successe to the meanes, but the God of Power? Man liveth not by bread onely, nor is the Patient cured by Physick onely, or chiefly, it is a word proceeding from the mouth of God that maketh the one effectually for continuation, and the other for restauration of health.

Mat. 4. 4.

To apply this in a three-fold admonition:

Hol. 6. 1.

1. Art thou wicked? As thou desirest health to be preserved, or renewed, make thy peace with God by repentance: it is the ground upon which the Jewish Converts mutually exhort each other to this duty, Come let us returne unto the Lord, for he hath torne, and he will heale us, he hath smitten, and he will binde

*binds us up*, though it be that indeed, which God out of his Philanthropie sometimes vouchsafeth, yet it is a fond presumption for any to expect that he should be a *Physitian* to them who are enemies to him. Me thinks an *ungodly* wretch should imagine that God *speaketh* to him in the words of the Prophet, *when thou cryest let thy companions deliver thee*; or, as he saith to the children of Israel, when they committed Idolatry, *Goe and cry unto the Gods which you have chosen, the lusts which you have served, let them deliver you in the time of your tribulation*. Had that accusation of *Ratsbakeb* been true, his argumentation was solid, when he sent that message to *Hezekiah*, *But if thou say to me, we trust in the Lord our God, is it not hee, whose high Places, and whose Altars Hezekiah hath taken away?* And surely the conscience of a wicked man (if not seared) cannot but check him in the like expressions, *Wilt thou say I trust in God for health, or recovery?* Is it not he whose Name thou hast blasphemed, *Patience* thou hast abused, and *Worship* thou hast neglected? Be wise therefore, oh ye sinners, and instructed ye wicked of the earth! make him your friend who must be your refuge, offer the sacrifice of righteousness, and then, not till then, put your trust in the Lord. Your life, your health is in his hands; looke that your doings be right, and then your persons shall bee precious in his eyes.

2. Art thou sick? learne whom to invoke, and on whom to depend for health, upon no other than God.

Far be it from any of us in sicknesse (with *Saul* in danger) to run to the *Pythomise*, and seek help of the *Devill*. *Satan's* best cures are deadly wounds; it is far better to continue sick, then by such meanes to get health. Since whilst thy mortall body is for a time restored, thy immortall soule is desperately endangered.

Nor yet let us with the *Papists* seeke to any *Saints* as *Mediatours* with God for our recovery. Whilst They have their severall *Saints* for severall *Diseases*; *Sebastian* for the *Plague*, *Anthony* for the *Gangreen*, *Patronilla* for *Agnes*, and *Benedict* for the *Stone*: Let us have recourse to the one God in all *Diseases*. Whilst they thinke it too great saucinesse to

Creatorem nobis  
propitium redda-  
mus, qui potius  
est nos tum mor-  
bis affligere, tum  
sanare.  
Ephr. de vir.  
spirit. T. 1.  
Ila. 57. 13.  
Judges 10. 14.  
Iay 36. 7.

τὸ το δὲ ἢ μι-  
κροῦ ἀρετῇ τὸ  
ἐπ' αὐτῷ θάρ-  
ρειν, καὶ ἐπ' αὐ-  
τῷ πεποιθεῖ-  
ναι μετὰ δὲ  
τῆς δικαιο-  
σύνης. Chrys.  
in Psal. 4. 6.

βέλτιον ἐν  
ταῖς ἀσθενεί-  
αις μέναι ἢ  
διὰ τὴν ἀ-  
παιχλίαν  
τῆς ἀδυναμίας  
εἰς ἀσεβείαν  
καταπεσεῖν  
καὶ γὰρ θε-  
ραπεία γόνι-  
μίζον κατὰ  
βλαφὴν ἢ  
ὠφελισμὸν.  
Chrys. T. 7.  
de Morb. &  
Med.



be their owne *spokes-men* to God; and therefore go to *saine* *somebody* to preferre their Petitions for them: let us hold it the best *manners* to go our *selves* of our *owne* errands to God, not doubting but that he, who bids us *come*, will bid us *welcome*.

2 Chron. 16. 12.

Finally, let us not tread in *Asa's* foot-steps, who sought not to the Lord, but to the *Physitians*; nor yet let us tread *Antipodes* to him in seeking to the Lord, and not to the *Physitians*, whilest he affords them: but as *Gideon* commanded his *Souldiers* to cry, the sword of the Lord, and of *Gideon*; so let us ever say, the blessing of the Lord, and the skill of the *Physitian*. Indeed where opportunity is vouchsafed, those two must not be severed. God will not usually help without *meanes*, and therefore they must be *used*; the *meanes* cannot possibly help without God; and therefore in the use of them his blessing must be implored. They are equally bad to neglect and to rest on second causes, to expect succour either from them originally, or without them instrumentally, to rely on God without *meanes*, or trust to *meanes* without God. Surely, what the King said to

2 Kings. 6. 27.

the woman, If the Lord doe not help thee, whence shall I help thee? that all creatures say to us in any distresse, If the Lord help not, whence shall we? except the Lord build the house, they labour in vaine that build it; except the Lord keep the City, the watchman watcheth but in vain, saith the Psalmist. Indeed he doth not say *quia*, because the Lord buildes the house, but *nisi*, as excluding humane diligence: but except the Lord build, thereby including divine providence: nor doth he onely say, *nisi dominus consenserit, adjuverit*, but *nisi adificaverit, custodierit*, unlesse the Lord consent, (a word which onely implyeth his will) or unlesse the Lord help, which extendeth to any kinde of assistance (the meanest thing that concurrerth to any work, being *causa adjuvans*, an auxiliary cause) but unlesse the Lord build and keep, which imply the concurrence of his power, as well as will, and that as the principall agent in the building and keeping: the same assertion is no lesse true in this present case, except the Lord heale the patient, the Physitian administreteth but in vaine. Heal thy self; is only true of that Physitian, to whom it was spoken: no other Physitian can of himself either

Psal. 127. 1.  
Frustra est  
omnis humana  
diligentia nisi  
divina accedat  
providentia.  
Musc. ibid.  
Id ibid.

Luke 4. 23.



either heale *himselfe* or others. *Tangit te Rex, Sanat te Deus*, was no lesse truly than *humbly* spoken when the Royall touch was given, *The King toucheth thee, God cureth thee*. It is so here, the *Physitian* prescribes the *medicine*, but *God* by that commands *health*. Oh therefore that *Physitians* in administering, patients in receiving, would onely depend upon, and sue for *divine* Benediction, when the one writes a *recipe* with his pen, let him pray with his heart; when the other receiveth the *potion* into his stomach, let him lift up his eyes to *God*, who Ezod. 15. 26. faith of himselfe, *I am the Lord that healeth thee*.

3. Art thou recovered? know whom to praise, and to whom to ascribe the cure: could the ingredients of thy medicine speak, each would say of health, as the depths and the Seas, Iob 28. 14. of wisdom, *It is not in me*: It is, I am sure, the voice of all pious Physitians, non nobis, not to us (oh man) not to us, but to Peter 5. 1: God be the praise of thy recovery. And therefore whilst the Atheist looketh no further than nature and art, let the Christian look higher at God and his blessing: and as he must not forget that respect which is due to the Physitian, as the Instrument, so let the chiefeest honour be given to God as being the principall efficient. The truth is, for the most part, such is our foolishnesse, that whilst we fix our eyes upon the blessings we receive, we turne our backs upon the God that bestoweth them, and we are more ready to father them upon any other than him, who is the true donor of them. Oh let not onely gratitude but justice, teach us to give God his due, when we gather the fruit let us cast downe our eyes on the root from which they sprout, when we feed upon the acornes, let us lift them up to the tree from whence they fall, and being refreshed by the flowing streame, let us reflect upon the springing fountaine. Oh my God, it is in thee that I live, let me live to thee; from thee I have received health, to thee I returne praise; I have the comfort, take thou the glory of thy great mercy. And so I passe forward to the

*Faciem quodamodoponentes ad ea quæ fecit, dorsum ponimus ad artificem qui fecit.*

*Si quando nobis prosperi aliquid præter spem nostram & meritum deus tribuit, alius ascribit hoc fortune, alius eventui, alius consilio, nullus deo.*

*Salv. de Cub. l. 7.*

2. Excellency of the Benefit, how expressed, in those words, Had mercy on him.

In mercy there are two things considerable, affectus, and effectus, the passion, and the action, the inward pity, and the

Misericordia  
nonnullis quod  
miserum cor fa-  
ciat.

Aug. contr. adv.  
leg. 1. 1. c. 20.

Misericors dici-  
tur aliquis si qua  
miserum cor  
habens.

Aquin par.  
prim. q. 21.  
art. 3.

Isa. 63. 9.

Jerem 31. 20.

Psal. 103. 16B.

Nobis non sibi  
loquitur, atque  
ideo nostris ui-  
tur in loquendo.

Hilar. in Pl. 126

μέγα ἀτυχ-

ἔντι φάρμα-

κον ἔλεος καὶ

τὸ συναλγεῖν

γνησίως πο-

λύτι κορίζει

τῆς σύμφο-

ρας. Greg.

Naz. Orat.

16.

Misericordia est

alienae miseriae

in corde nostro

compassio, qui

utique (si possi-

mus) subvenire

compellimur.

Aug. de civit.

dei. 1. 9. c. 8.

owtward bounty, that is in the heart, this in the hand; that the bowels of mercy, this the works of mercy; that called by the Greekes ἐλεος, and this ἐλεήμοσυνη, and both these, though not in the same sense, are attributed to God, and here to be understood.

1. In mercy there is a laying of anothers misery to heart, The Greeke word ἐλεος is derived from the Hebrew נלה: which signifieth Ejulare, plangers, to bewaile and lament: a condolency with our Brothers calamity, being a choice ingredient of mercy. This is that which the Holy Ghost asserteth of God in Scripture, where it is said, in all their afflictions he was afflicted: And againe, My bowels are troubled: And againe, Like as a Father pittiyeth his Children, so the Lord pittiyeth them that feare him: But withall, we must know, that in these Phrases the most high is pleased to condescend, and speaking to men, to speak of himselfe, as if he were a man. There is not then any sorrow or compassion in him who is impassible, but by this is represented his good will towards his people, whereby he is propense to succour them. And because the afflicted person findes oft times much ease and solace in that sympathie, which another expresth towards him, that we may know the like solace is to be found in God, this compassion is attributed to God; and indeed is, though not formally, yet equivalently, nay eminently verified of him. To bring this home, in that God is said to have mercy on dying Epaphroditus, it implyeth thus much, that God beholding and taking notice of, was as it were affected with his imminent danger, having after a fort a friendly pittie, and motherly yearning, or rather a fatherly good-will towards him. But this is not all that mercy includeth, and therefore know,

2. In mercy there is an indeavour to relieve him whose misery it condolet, as she suffereth with, so she doth for, and (according to her ability) either helpeth him to beare the burden by putting under her shoulder, or wholly easeth him of it by removing it from his shoulder. Hence the definition of mercy is well given to be such a compassion of anothers misery, as puts upon a cheerfull imploing our power for the sustaining him under, and delivering him out of it. This is that which

in

in a proper and genuine sense agreeth to God, whose property is to deliver his out of their afflictions, and preserve them from destruction: and this no doubt, is that which our Apostle here especially intends in this expression, God had mercy on him, that is, he did remove his misery, and prevent his death by curing him of that sickness which had brought him nigh to it.

Let the same minde be in us that is in God: when our brethren are under sickness, or any other distresse, to have mercy on them. It was our blessed Saviours reasoning with the Pharisees, though not altogether to the same purpose, Which of you shall have an Asse or an Ox fall into the pit, and will not straightway pull him out? Surely one man is of more worth then many Asses; and shall we not, in what we may, succour him when fallen into some grievous sickness?

That good Samaritan in the Type is no other than Christ in the Truth, who pityed and healed man when dangerously wounded by sinne, and as it was the designe of his death to cure mankind of his spirituall sickness, so his practise in the course of his life to go about doing good and healing. If we call our selves Christians, whom should we imitate but Christ, by performing all offices of love to the sick, which lye within our Spheare? and if we have no oyle but that of compassion, no wine but teares and prayers, let them be poured into the wounds and diseases of thy neighbour; so shall we bee Disciples of Christ. But the Text leads us yet one step higher from Christ, as man, and as God-man, to Christ as God, acquainting us with Gods mercy to a sick man: and what more befitting man then to imitate God by practising this God-like worke of mercy. μέγα καὶ τίμιον ἀνὴρ ἐλεήμων, a mercifull

Tristari de misericordia alicuius non competit Deo, sed repellere misericordiam alicuius hoc maxime ei competit. Aquin. par. prim. qn. 21. art. 3. Nomen misericordiae pro opere. Zanch. in loc. Dicitur misericordia, quod misericordia cuiusdam est Remotio,

Est. ibid. ἡ ἐστὶν ἀντιμετώπεος τοῦ τῷ κτήνι οὐ ἀνδρωπεί.

&c. Greg. Naz. Orat. 16.

ἀνδρωπεί οὐ ἀδελφεύουσα, ἀλλ' οὐ παρὰ δεισέει, ἰεραρχῶν κόσμου, λήσας οἱ πορνεῖαι λόγισμοι

καὶ ἡ παράβασις, ταμαίτης οὐ χεῖρ. Athanas. qu. 15. de parab. δὲς ἀντιμεγάλου περιουσίαν εἰ μηδὲν ἔχης δάκρυον. Greg. Naz. Orat. 16. A Christo didicisti Christianis vivere ut quia Christus ambularet, et vos debetis ambulare. Bern. Ser. ad pass. Pr. 20. 6. Sept. Vere Magnus qui divini operis interpres est ut imitatur Amb. in Ps. 118. τὸ ἄλλον καὶ ἐχθρὸν σε περὶ καλεῖται γενέσθαι ὁ λόγος, οὐκ ἐν μορφῇ θέντα τῷ τῆς θεότητος ἰδιώματι. Greg. Nys. de Beat. Or. 5. γενεῖ τῷ ἀτυχῶντι θεῷ καὶ ἐλεον θεῷ μιμησάμενος. Greg. Naz. Orat. 16.



Eph. 6.1.

Luke 6.36

Nihil dignius  
quam ut homo-  
sit auctoris sui  
imitator, & se-  
cundum modum  
propriae faculta-  
tis divini sit ope-  
ris executor.

Leo de quadr.  
Serm. 5.

Psal. 41.3

Prospicit paupe-  
ri, agro agroso,  
attenuato.

Vatabl. ibid.

Improbis petitor;  
qui quod alius  
negat sibi postu-  
lat. Homo esto  
tibi misericordia  
forma, sic quomo-  
do vis, quantum  
vis, quam cito  
vis misericor-  
diam tibi fieri,  
tam cito alii,  
tantum, taliter  
ipse misere.

Chrysost. Serm.  
43.

Mat. 15.7.

Vita mari est  
similis, namque  
ut mare vita  
procellas: Hæc  
habet & ventos  
naufragiumque  
frequens.

Anth. sacr.

man is great and honourable, and that for this reason chiefly, because he is like to God, in which respect Gregory Nyssen, and Nazianzen call such a man a God, as having stampt upon him the Character of a Deity. Bee yee therefore followers of God as deare Children, is Saint Paul's counsell in generall, Be you mercifull, as your Father also is mercifull, so our blessed Saviour adviseth in speciall: and yet more particularly, as God had mercy on sick Epaphroditus, so let us on our sick neighbour, by visiting him, (if we can by our skill or counsell doe him good) however by compassionating him, and interceding with God in his behalfe.

And because this duty is that which (though so honourable) we are averse from; give me leave to carry it a little further, & let you see it is profitable, as well as honourable. Not only that you may follow God in mercy, but that you may upon the like occasion obtain mercy from God, shew mercy to others. It is a sweet promise to feed on in a time of sicknesse. The Lord will strengthen him upon the bed of languishing, thou wilt make all his bed in his sicknesse. That bed must needs be easie which God maketh, nor can he faint, whom God strengtheneth, but to whom is it made? him and none but him who considereth the poore, so our Translation, but the Hebrew word לחל may as well be rendered sick, one that is weakened by a disease: he who considereth others in their sicknesse, shall be supported by God in his. Which of us, beloved, doth not desire that God may shew that mercy to us in our distresse, which he did here to Epaphroditus? But how can we expect God should grant that to us, which we deny to others? Blessed are the mercifull, saith Christ, for they shall obtaine mercy: Be then oh man to thy selfe, a patterne of mercy, and shew with that speed, and in that degree, mercy to thy sick, weak, languishing neighbour, which thou wouldst have God vouchsafe to thee in the like condition. But a little more to unbowell this Clause.

The mercy here intended (as you have already heard) was the prolongation of life, and restauration of health to Epaphroditus: and here a double question falls in to be resolved,

How this can be called a mercy? And

If a mercy in it selfe, yet how a mercy to him?

Quest.

*Qu. I.* It is a plausible *Objection* which is made, that life prolonged is no mercy, because it is a calamitous continuance in an evil world: what is this world but a *Coffer of Sorrows*, *Labyrinth of Troubles*, *Schoole of Vanity*, *Market of Fraud*, *Theater of Tragedies*, *Floud of Teares*, and *Map of Ruines*? And can it be a favour for a man to continue long in a place of miseries? The earth we tread on, the aire we breath in, are as a Sea, wherein windes and stormes are ever blowing; and can it be a favour to be still tossed up and downe upon a blustering tempestuous Sea? Finally, this life is not a life but a calamity, yea, rather a death then a life, because so miserable: to live long is to be long tormented, and can this be a mercy?

*Ans.* To all this it is briefly, but fully answered. That though there be many evils in the world, yet the world is not evil, nor is it evil to abide in the world. These miseries are only accidental to life, and so hinder not, but that preservation from death is a mercy. And therefore the Greek Fathers upon this Scripture do hence most rationally confute the *Manichees*, who affirme the world in its owne nature to be bad, *τι λέγεις ὃ αἰσέτις*. so St. Chrysostome, ὁ μαρικαῖς. So Theophilaet in particular. What sayest thou to this, oh hereticall Manichee? If the world be wicked, and the life which we now live in it, how doth the Apostle call this a mercy of God, that he lengthened Epaphroditus his dayes? The other life is better than this, surely then this must be good, an immature death is threatned, and inflicted as a judgement, surely then the continuance of life must be a mercy, as those forementioned Fathers excellently argue,

Life is a mercy, and yet health is a greater mercy. *Ἀῶσον ὑγιαίνειν* was written upon the porch of Apollo's Temple, health is the *Princesse of earthly blessings*: and Plato tells us that *ἄεισον ὑγιαίνειν* was sung by every one to his Harpe at the Schooles, and at Festivals. Beauty, riches, health, were the three things Pythagoras said should chiefly be implored of the Gods; but among them health the chiefe: indeed, it is that which maketh life it selfe to be a mercy, since *non est vivere sed valere vita*, To live is not so much to breath, as to be well.

Mercies then they are (especially) when conjoyned, and being  
so

ὁ βίος ἀληθῶς  
ὁ βίος, ἀλλὰ  
σύμφορος.

Philem.

Tanta est tribu-  
latio huius mise-  
rae vitae, ut nec  
vita sit dicenda,  
sed potius mors,  
vel quod propter  
aliud morte  
deterius.

Idiot de pati.

Quid est diu

vivere nisi diu

torqueri.

Aug. de verb.

dom. Serm. 17

Chrylost. } in

Theoph. } loc.

O. cum. }

καλὸν ἢ πα-  
ρεῖσα ζωὴ αὐ-  
τῇ καθ' ἑαυ-  
τὴν. Theoph.

ibid.

Aristot. Eth. l.

1. c. 8

Plat. in Gorg.

Mar. Ep. 70.

l. 6.

*Una est catena  
quæ nos alligatos  
tenet, amor vite  
qui ut non est  
abijiciendus, ita  
miuendus est.  
Sen. Ep. 27.*

*Corpus infra  
animam est &  
quævis anima  
vilius excellenti-  
us corpore ex-  
cellentior inue-  
nitur.*

*Aug. in Pl. 145.*

*Chrys. in loc.  
Mors pot. in finem  
omnibus, malis in  
hic vita, dat  
terminum malis  
in hoc sæculo,  
adimit omnem  
calamitatem.  
Bern. de mod.  
viv. Sermon 30.*

so in their own nature, ought so to be esteemed of by us : in which respect we ought to pray and give thanks for them as blessings. It is no lesse a fault to undervalue, then to overprize our lives and health : this latter (I confesse) is the more common, but the former is no lesse culpable : we must not be so much in love with life as to dote upon it, because it is short, yet we may so farre love, as to desire, and endeavour that it may, yea, with the Apostle here, account it a mercy, when it is prolonged.

I end this, If deliverance from death be a mercy, how great a mercy is deliverance from hell ? If it be a blessing to have the danger of a mortall disease prevented, Oh what is it to have the guilt of our deadly sinnes pardoned ? Finally, if the health of the body be a favour, how choice a benefit is the soules health ? Surely by how much hell is worse then death, sin then sicknesse, yea, by how much the soule is better than the body, by so much is the one to be preferred before the other. Oh my soule, thou wast sick, desperately sick of sinne, so sick that thou wast not only nigh to death, but dead in sinnes, and trespasses ; but God had mercie on thee, he hath sent his Sonne to heale, to revive thee, by being himselfe wounded, nay, slain : and his spirit to cure, to quicken thee by killing thy sinne, and renewing thy nature. Thou art indebted to thy God for temporall, much more for spirituall : Blesse the Lord, oh my soule, for thy life of nature, health of thy body ; but let all that is within thee praise his holy name for thy life of grace, and eternall salvation.

Qu. 2. But it is further inquired, though this recoverie were a mercy in it selfe, yet how could it be so to Epaphroditus a godly man ? Had it been deliverance by death, this were a merrey indeed ; but deliverance from death seemeth rather an injury than a courtesie, πρὸς μὲν τὸν διέρετικὸν εὐκολον εἰπεῖν πρὸς δὲ τὸν χριστιανὸν τὸ ἐρεῖμεν, we may easily refell the Heretick, but how shall we answer the Christians who desiring to be dissolved knoweth not how to esteeme the deferring his dissolution a mercy ? Had Epaphroditus been a wicked man, it had been a great mercy to spare him, that he might make his peace with God by the practice of faith and repentance ; but to him, whose peace was already made, what advantage could the pro-  
longing



longing of his life afford? Death it selfe to a good man is a deliverance, a totall, finall deliverance from all sorrow and misery for ever: And can that be a deliverance, which keepeth off our deliverance? per *Angusta pervenitur ad angusta*, This red Sea leads to Canaan; through the valley of death we passe to the mount of glory: And can that be a mercy which retardeth our felicity? Is it a courtesie for a man to be detained from his wages, and held to labour? to be hindred from rest, and called to worke? to be withheld from his country, and wander in a wilderness? Finally, to be kept out of a Palace, and confined to a Prison? And yet, all this is true of a godly man, who when nigh to death, is called back againe to live longer in this world.

Ans<sup>w</sup>. To answer this, though upon those forementioned considerations, it cannot be denied but that death is a mercy to a Saint; yet those hinder not, but that in other respects the continuance of life is a mercy, even to a godly man. As for that κοινή συνήθεια, which the Greek Fathers speak of, as if Saint Pauls language were more according to custome than truth, and that when he calls recovery a mercy, he rather speaketh as men doe account, than as it is indeed, it seemes to me somewhat harsh, that τοῦ κερδαίνειν ψυχὰς, the opportunity of gaining more souls to God, which this preservation afforded him, is a farre more rationally solution. Upon this account it was Saint Paul looked upon the prolongation of his owne life as needfull: So he expresseth it in the former Chapter. And here, for the same reason, he calleth the restoration of Epaphroditus to health a mercy. To this purpose Saint Hieromes note upon the Text is very apposite, Misertus est ejus ut majorem docendo colligat fructum, God had mercy on him, that he, being a Minister, might by the preaching of the Gospell, gather in more soules, and doe more good.

Obj. But you will say, this seemes not to be a full Answer: Indeed, had the Apostle said, but God had mercy on you, namely the Philippians, this would be very suitable; the recovery of a faithfull Minister is, no doubt, a mercy to the People; but still it remaineth a doubt, how the Apostle could say, as here he doth, God had mercy on him, to wit, Epaphroditus.

E

Moritur quidem  
justus sed solum  
quippe cu-  
jus mors ut  
praesentis exitus  
est vita, ita in-  
troitus melioris.  
id. Ep. 105.  
Eris janua vitae,  
initium refri-  
gerii eris, sancta  
illius mens  
scala & ingres-  
sus in locum  
tabernaculi.  
Id. in serm.

Chrysost. in  
Theoph. 1 loc

Chrysost. ibid.  
ἔλαον λέγει  
τὴν ἐνταῦθα  
ζωὴν καὶ φέ-  
ρην ὅτι δι' ἡν  
αἰτίαν ἀνω ει-  
πεν ἀνασκαί-  
τερον δὲ τὸ  
ἐπιμῆναι ἐν  
τῇ σαρκὶ δι'  
ὑμᾶς. Oecu.  
in Loc.

Phil. 1. 24.

Hieron. in loc.

Repl.

*Repl. To which I reply, That the opportunity of this service was not onely a benefite to the Church, but a mercy to him, in as much as by this meanes.*

*Considerandum est non esse parvam dignationem quam se Deus in nobis glorificat. Calv. in lo.*

*Phil. 1. 20.*

*Qui Christo vivunt, facilius in spem gloriae caelestis exercentur. Calv. ibid. Dan. 12. 2.*

*Act. 20. 35.*

1. He became a greater instrument of Gods glory; It is an high honour, which God vouchsafeth to that man, whom he makes use of to serve and honour him; and to a pious soule nothing is dearer than Gods glory, desiring rather to glorify God than to be glorified with him: this Saint Paul declares to his hope, yea, his earnest expectation, that Christ might be magnified in his body whether by life or death. No wonder then, if considering how much Epaphroditus his life might conduce to Gods glory, he reckoned it as a mercy. Besides,

2. He increased his owne reward; the longer a good man, especially a good Minister liveth, the more sinners he converteth, and they that turne many to righteousness, saith Daniel, shall shine as the starres for ever and ever, nay, every soule that a faithfull Minister winnes to God, is as a new gemme added to that Crown, which shall one day be put upon his head.

Thus then the case stands; Epaphroditus indeed, by dying, had received his reward, but by living he did the more service; by dying he had obtained glory from God, but by living he brought glory to God: and our blessed Saviour saith, It is a more blessed thing to give than to receive; by dying he had enjoyed his recompence sooner, by living he made it greater, that would have accelerated, but this augmented it, so that even in respect of his owne future happinesse he was no loser but a gainer by the prolonging of his life, and therefore most justly doth Saint Paul say, God had mercy on him.

Briefly, and yet clearly to state the whole matter.

Life and death may be considered and compared four wayes,

1. In their formall nature, and so death is a privation, life a possession of good; and therefore death evil, and life good,

2. In their Causes, death is a fruit of sin, life an effect of love; our wickednesse deserved the one, Gods goodnesse conferreth the other; in which respect, death is threatened as a punishment, life promised as a reward.

3. In their naturall and proper effects, death bereaveth as well

well godly, as wicked men of the society of friends, possession of their estates, yea, all the comforts which this world affords, whereas by life we have the fruition of them continued to us, so that in this regard also, life is farre better than death, even to a good man.

4. Lastly, in their accidentall consequents, when a wicked man dyeth there followeth torment, but whilest he liveth there is hope of his repentance, yea, many times it so falls out, some come into the Vineyard at the eleventh houre, and to such life is a choice mercy indeed: when a godly man dyeth he is carried into Abrahams bosome, placed in a state of blisse; but by living longer he honoureth God, edifieth the Church, worketh out his salvation; he gaineth both the more time to prepare himselfe for, get assurance of, yea, make an addition to his future glory, and therefore in this likewise, and so in all comparisons life hath the preheminance, and the continuance of it is justly called by the Apostle a mercy.

To close up this, life continued, health restored, are mercies; oh let not us by abusing them to sinne turne them into judgement, who can believe it? and yet we may often see it, men change blessings into curses by their iniquities, and as Parisiens excellently expresseth it, *Ipsa beneficia sibi faciunt pœnalia & instrumenta contra seipos divina iustitia*, They make benefits to become punishments, and the fruits of Gods mercy instruments of his justice. The truth is, it was not so much life as the right use, Saint Paul conceived Epaphroditus would make of his life, which moved him to call it a mercy, *Multis periculo & pestilens sanitas fuit qui tutius agrotassent*: Indeed these things are good or evill to us according as we imploy them. It had been a greater mercy to many impenitent sinners that they had continued sick, or dyed, then that they were recovered. Let us therefore lay out our life, our health, according to our severall places, in Gods service, so shall it prove glory to God, benefit to others, and a mercy to us: Oh my soule, thou hast received, as it were, a new life, improve it in new obedience; health is restored to thy body, imploy it in the service of thy God: why should thy honey be turned into gall, thy shield into a sword, thy delicacies into poyson? Oh let thy life be expended by thee, as it was intended

*Quis hoc credere quoad, unam illius naturam rerum iniquitatis nostrae, Gre. Salv. de Gub. l. 6. Paris. de Universo prim. pare pars tertia. c. 9. Petrarch dial. de valet. corp. Est perniciose sanitas quæ ad inobedientiam ducit. Bern. de inter. dom.*



by God; so shalt thou have cause to take up the Apostles language, God had mercy on me. And thus much shall suffice for the second particular, I hasten to the

3. Opportunity of the time, which is the last branch implied in the exceptive But. And a comfortable But it is; indeed, the sicknesse, like a floud was carrying him away, God puts in a But, and stops its current; Epaphroditus was falling into the pit, But God reacheth forth an hand to uphold him. God doth not so preserve him that the sicknesse should not come, nay, when it is come he doth not hinder it from increasing, but when it is come to the height, then he rebuketh the disease, and saith, hitherto thou shalt come and no further. All hopes of his recovery in mans eyes are perished, and lo, he is raised by the hand of God. Means either are not afforded, or however unable to help. God becommeth his Physitian, and commandeth the cure. It lets us see thus much, that

Jo. 5. 7.  
En horam tuam  
domine, ades  
enim deus cui  
homo deest.  
Velasq. in  
Phil.  
Herodes gentis  
judaica invasis  
regnum, liberta-  
tem sustulit,  
prophanavit  
sancta; quicquid  
culta est, abole-  
vit, merito ergo  
genti sancta quia  
humana desunt,  
divina succur-  
rant.  
Chrisol. serm.  
116.

When all hopes are livelesse, and helps seem fruitlesse, then is the season of Gods deliverance. That childs condition is very sad, whom the father and mother forsake; but then the Psalmist finds God ready to take him up: And the causall particle in the Originall is very considerable, not onely when, but because he was as a forsaken babe, God vouchsafeth to protect and provide for him; our extremity being not onely the opportunity when, but a motive why God will deliver. It was a dolefull complaint which the poore Creeple made to Christ, ἀνδρωπον ἔκ ἐχω, I have not a man to put me into the poole, but even that narration is an efficacious prayer; The absence of mans help, being the season of Christs presence and succour. Saint Paul speaking of our blessed Saviours Incarnation, saith, it was when the fulnesse of time came; if you will know when that full time was, the Evangelist answereth, it was in the dayes of Herod the King: and if with Chrysologus you looke into those dayes, you shall find them dayes of extreame misery to the Jewish Nation, their Temple profaned, Liberty suppressed, Worship abolished, and the whole State full of confusion. In those dayes was the fulnesse, because indeed the fitnesse of time come for him, who was the Redeemer, to appeare, and the horne of salvation to be raised up. In which respect the Messiah is called by Moses a  
fit

fit man, or according to the Originall, a man of opportunity. Thy way oh God is in the sea, and thy paths in the great waters, Psal. 77. 19. saith the Psalmist. By which expressions no doubt he chiefly intends (as appeares by what followeth) to note the imperceptible secrecie attending upon many of Gods dispensations, so that we can no more discerne the reason of them, than we can any impression of a ships passage in the Sea, but yet withall it is not an improbable allusion to understand Sea and great waters representing doleful and perillous distresses: Gods usual course being to manifest himself not in the shallow river of a slight trouble, but the deep sea of some desperate calamity. The Disciples enter into a ship, but Christ comes not, the sable mantle of the night covers them, and Christ cometh not, the winde bloweth, the storme rageth, the waves arise, and yet Christ appeareth not, but when they have rowed 25. or 30. furlongs, being farre from land, and in the depth of danger, then they see Iesus walking on the Sea, and drawing nigh to the ship to succour them. To this purpose is S. Cyrills observation upon this storie, Christ doth not presently at the beginning of the storme appeare to his Disciples, but when they had rowed far from land. Christ is not alwayes at hand upon the first onset, but when through prevailing fear, & almost over-whelming danger, our spirits begin to fail, then he breaks forth as it were in the midst of the waves, calming the storm, expelling our feare, and preventing our ruine.

Ioh. 6. 19.  
ἐπιτήρει ὅ-  
πως ἔκ τοῦ θύ-  
σου ἀποπλεύσα-  
σιν ἡδὲ ἐν  
ἀρχῇ τῶν  
κινδύων τοῖς  
ἐν τῷ σκάφει  
χείρις ἐπι-  
σώσειν αὐτοὺς. Cy.

It is very observable in that hundred and seventh Psalm, when the Prophet celebrateth Gods goodnesse to severall sorts of men in their dangers, that their deliverance was not vouchsafed till their danger appeared remediless: of travellers it is said, they wandered so long in the wilderness, till by reason of hunger and thirst their soule fainted in them, and then, not till then upon their crying the Lord delivered them; The Captives are said to sit in darknesse and the shadow of death, by reason of their bonds, yea, to fall downe and none to help them, and then this want of help obtaineth help, at their earnest cry God saveth them out of their distresse; when sick, men are brought so low that their soule abhorreth all manner of meat, and they draw nigh to the gates of death, then God sendeth his Word and healeth them: finally, the Seamans soule is melted because of trouble, they reele

Alex. in Joh.  
Psal. 107. 3,  
4. 5.  
ὁ δὲ χλωσ-  
μὸς τῆς δου-  
ραμίας ἐπε-  
δείκνυεν βοήθειαν.  
Greg. Nyss.  
Tract in Ps.

ver. 10, 12, 13.  
ver. 18, 20.

Ver. 16. 17, 18,  
29.

Pfal. 142. 4.

to and fro, and stagger like a drunken man, yea, are at their wits end, not knowing what course to take, ere God begins to make the storme a calme, and so bringeth them out of their distresse. Thus God, as he can, so usually he doth help at a pinch, when Jacob wants bread at home, Joseph is heard of abroad: when the Prodigall wants abroad, he is minded of going home; and when we looke with David on the right hand, and there is no man, yea, on the left hand, nay round about us, and all refuge faileth us,

*Restat iter cælo,*

we may looke up to God, and God is ready to looke downe from heaven and help us.

And now if you shall inquire why God is pleased to cull out such a time of succour, when in extreame perill, of curing, when sick nigh to death: I answer, it is both in reference to himselfe and us.

In regard of himselfe,

1. Partly that it may appeare to be his worke, Those effects in the production of which, God is as it were *causa sociæ* a copartner, making use of probable meanes, too often the instrument is more looked upon than God; but those effects wherein he is *causa solitaria*, the sole agent (effecting them as it were by his owne hand) enforce men to acknowledge it is his doing. *Quando humana omnem spem negant, tunc divina dispensatio clare fulget*, In the day-time, when other starres appeare not, we know the light which shines is onely from the Sun; so when secondary meanes succeed not to whom but God can the patient ascribe his recovery? and for this reason, *ne opus cælestis dextra assignaretur virtuti humana*, that the creature may not rob him of his glory, he chuseth that time to deliver when the creature can afford no succour.

2. Chiefly, that in such works he may appear to be a God, in as much as his Almighty power and mercy, hereby become illustrious: it is the prayer of David, *shew thy mevailous loving kindenesse*; the Septuagint and vulgar (agreeing in this with the Hebrew) render it, *make thy mercyes wonderfull*, and surely when our misery is most dolefull, Gods mercy is most wonderfull, and therefore, saith Saint Gregory, we most admire Gods benignity,

Velasq. in Phil.  
Permissis deum  
crescere pericula  
ut periclitanti-  
um merita aug-  
cantur; extreme  
autem pericli-  
tansibus opem  
ferit ut suam po-  
tentiam demon-  
stret. Mend in  
lib. 1. Reg. cap.  
2. n. 6.  
Psal 17. 7.  
Δαυὶδ ὁ σὺν  
τῷ ἐλὲν σὺ.  
Sept. Mirifica  
misericordias  
tuas. Vulg.



benignity, when we call to minde our calamity: indeed God bringeth us nigh to death, that we may know our selves how fraile and mortall we are, that he may know us, or rather make knowne to us and others our graces, and when we are nigh to death he hath mercy, that we may know him, not onely speculatively, but experimentally, how great and mighty, how good and gracious he is: The truth is, *Omnipotentī medico, nullum vulnus insanabile*, No wound is incurable to this omnipotent Physician: and that he may appeare to be so, he often deferreth the cure till humane skill and helpe faileth. In such deliverances, the characters of Gods, almighty goodnesse are plainly written so, that the blind Egyptians can read them; and therefore seeing the Israelites escape an imminent danger they acknowledge the Lord fighteth for them. *Exod: 14: 25*:

In respect of us, that the deliverance may be the more acceptable to us, as well as honourable to him, To every thing, saith Solomon, there is a season, and indeed it is the season that putteth a beauty upon every thing; in this regard, that of the Prophet *quam speciosi*, how beautifull are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, is rendered by Tertullian, *quam tempestivi*, how opportune, that which is seasonable being ever beautifull; indeed in every opportune mercy there is a double beauty, the one in the thing conferred, the other in the time of conferring it. It is the prayer of the Church to God, Gird thy sword upon thy thigh with thy glorie and thy majesty, which latter words the vulgar latine reads *cum specie tua & pulchritudine tua*, that is to say, with thy beauty and thy beauty: and this is then most fully verified, when God girds his sword to defend his Church in her lowest misery, and offend his enemies in their highest insolency. It is a sweet and choice expression of the Prophet, The Lord will wait that he may be gracious, which though it be chiefly intended of his forbearing judgement, yet it is no lesse true of his withholding mercy: God therefore oft times delaying, that he may appeare the more gracious in bestowing deliverance; so true is that of the Father, *Dans cum differt non negat sed commendat dona*, God in suspending intends not to deny, but onely to commend his mercy. Abrahamas childe was more welcome at seventy, than if he had been given at thirty, and the same

Isaac.

Tunc nolis misericordia dei  
mirificatur  
cum nobis  
ad memoriam  
miseria nostra  
revocantur.

Greg hom. 18.  
in Ezech.

N b.l. exiat  
quod Dei pot. n-  
tiam vincat, ni-  
hil quod omni-  
potenti illi nutui  
obstare valeat.  
Sophr. Arch.  
hom. in Bible  
pat.

τι τὸ τοῦ σω-  
ματιώτερον  
ἢ μέζον τῆς  
τοῦ θεοῦ μαγα-  
λοῦσας πε-  
μῆσιον ὅταν  
ἐκ τῶν ὑπέρων  
δέλῃ πόνον  
δέναι τοῖς  
πράγμασι.

Greg. Naz.  
Orat 32.  
Isa. 52. 7.  
Tertul. contra.  
Mar. l. 5. c. 2.  
Psal 45. 3.  
Isa. 30. 18.

ἢ γὰρ ὅταν ἡ  
χαρισία τῇ  
τοῖς κινδυνεύ-  
ουσιν ἐπιδέναι  
τὴν σωτηρίαν  
πᾶσαν αὐτοῖς  
τὴν ἐπὶ τῷ

ζῆν ἐλπίδα  
παραπορευμέν-  
την ἡδὴ τῆς  
εἰρήνης. Cyr.  
Alex. in Joh.  
6. 19.

Isaac had not beene so precious, had he not beene as miracu-  
lously restored as given. In fine, the language of a depopulating  
warre is the best rhetoricke to extoll the blessing of peace, how  
welcome is a calme to the Marriner after a blustering storme?  
and health is never so amiable, as when it brings letters of com-  
mendation from a long and dangerous sicknesse.

Erasm. simil.

Phil. 3. 1.  
Flor. 1. 4. c. 8.

Justus semper  
sperat. & in ad-  
versis posuit  
frequenter  
afflictus arum  
a spera e non  
novit.

Ambr. in Pl.  
11. Oct. 19.  
ὅταν εἰς ἁπο-  
ρίαν τὰ  
πράγματα  
ἐμπέσῃ τότε  
μάλιστα ἐλπί-  
ζε. &c.

Chrys. in  
Psal. 117.

Ezek. 3. 16.

To apply this, It is a meditation which should encourage us  
to trust in God, even when things are at the worst, and though  
all other succours faile, not to let goe our hold of him: As  
Apelles striving to paint a drop of foam falling from a Horses  
mouth, after long study, despairing, let his pencill fall, and that  
fall did it, *Quod assequi non potuit casus expressit*, effecting by  
chance what he could not by art, and when both nature and  
art can goe no further, divine providence undertaketh, nay,  
effecteth the worke, and therefore, as the Apostle saith of joy,  
I say of hope, hope alwayes in the Lord, indeed, *magna indolis est  
sperare semper*, it is an argument of an heroick minde, to hope  
alwayes, and of a pious minde to place that hope on God;  
David saith of himselfe, I have hoped in thy word, the Septua-  
gint read it ἐπὶ ἡλπίσα, and the vulgar Latine accordingly *super-  
speravi*, which as S. Ambrose interpreteth it, is *ad sperandum sem-  
per crescere & spem spei adjungere*, to add hope to hope, & that even  
then when affliction is added to affliction: Excellent to this pur-  
pose is that counsel of the Greeke Father, When externall means  
are least, let thy confidence be greatest, for then God displayeth his  
power most, not at the beginning, but when things are desperate,  
for this is the season of divine help. It is our great fault that  
in dismall dangers we open the eye of sense, and onely pore upou  
the extremity of the trouble, whereas it becometh a Saint, even  
then to open the eye of faith, and looke upon the energy of Gods  
power.

And to carry it one step further, Let even the depth of misery  
be an incouragement to our confidence, in as much as that is  
a time of deliverance: when the night is at the darkest, we  
know day-break is nearest, the lownesse of the ebbe argueth the  
flowing in of the tide to be at hand: so may we conclude divine  
succour approaching from the premisses of a grievous calamity  
encompassing. We read in the vision of the wheel, which Ezekiel  
saw

saw there was a wheele in the midst of a wheele, by which two wheelles Justin Martyr understandeth the Jewes captivity in Babylon, and their restitution to their owne Country, and one wheele is said to be in the midst of the other, as if their returne were ingraven in their very bondage, whilest the one gave hope of the other. Strange, but yet comfortable is the Promise, which God maketh to his Church, I will give her the valley of Achor for a doore of hope. Achor signifieth confusion, perturbation; and yet this will God make, a doore of hope, whilest that perturbation proveth but a sad Prologue to a joyfull restauration. Strange, but yet strong was the faith which the Psalmist expresseth, where he saith, Though an hoste should encamp against me, my heart shall not feare, though warre should rise against me, in this will I be confident: Loe here, a soule like the ark rising with the waters, the encamping of an hoste is terrible, and yet David feareth not: the rising up of warre is yet more dangerous; and David will not onely not feare, but be confident: Nor yet (which is very observable) doth he say in God, but in this, that is the very warre it selfe will I be confident, as knowing, that when the enemy did not onely encamp about, but warre against him (so that either he must perish, or God must help) it would not be long ere the wisdom of the Almighty would finde out a way to rescue him. Not much unlike this, is that resolution of holy Job, Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him; death and hope seeme to be at the greatest distance, and yet here they are brought together: death could not kill Job's hope, nay, according to Pagnines reading of the Hebrew text, Ecce occidet me, behold he will slay me; death it selfe giveth life to his hope, and becometh a prop for his confidence.

Let this be our practise at least, endeavouring to attaine this high pitch of faith and dependance on God. True it is, if we behold the sad condition of this Church at this day, we shall find many dying Symtomes upon it; Heresie hath poisoned it, Sacrilege starved it, Schisme wounded it, yea, a licentious toleration almost strangled it: And I doubt not but the people of God mourne in secret for these abominations; and yet (to use Saint Paul's expressions on another occasion) Let us not sorrow as

F

wichone

δίκτυον τῷ  
τετραγώνῳ  
τετραγώνῳ ἐν τῷ  
τετραγώνῳ  
ὡς δὲ αὐτῷ  
τὸν τὸν ἰσ-  
δαίων ἀπα-  
γωγὴν εἰς  
ἀρχιμαυρίαν  
καὶ ἀπαγωγὴν  
εἰς τὰ ἰδία.

Justin. Mart.  
qu. 44.

Ibi aperta est  
spes ubi fuerat  
desperatio.

Hier. ibid.

Hos. 2. 15.

Psal. 27. 2.

Si surrexerit su-  
per me bellum, in  
illud ego spera-  
bo. Sic legit.

Cypr. de exort.

Mart.

Job. 13. 15.

Job tot gravium

incommodorum

acerbissimis pro-

pter cumulat

afflictis.

Ambr. in Psal.

118.

1 Thes. 4. 13.



John 11.4: without hope, that this sicknesse of our Church (like that of Lazarus) shall not be to death, but to the glory of God, when the set time to have mercy upon Sion shall come. Again, it cannot be denied (oh that it were more lamented) our land is desolate, and nigh to ruine, the whole head is sick, and the heart is faint, from the sole of the foot even to the head there is no soundnesse in it, but wounds and bruises, and putrifying sores; and yet there is hope in this matter, *confidat qui agit poenitentiam, quia erit tempus salvandi*. Let all penitent mourners believe, and expect a day of salvation: Finally, none of us but may at some time or other be brought low, and in this particular of the text, be sick nigh to death: Oh let us treasure up this truth, as a cordiall against that evil day, and learne, even in our fainting fits, to encourage our selves in the Lord our God.

Hier. in Pl. 101  
Constitutus in  
extremo periculo  
dens succurrit  
memorabili bo-  
nitatis exemplo,  
quo nos in simili  
discrimine positi  
erigamur, scien-  
tes Deum non  
desuturum no-  
stris necessitati-  
bus, etiam in  
solitudine, modo  
ad eum precibus  
confugiamus.  
Par. in loc.

1 Sam. 30. 2.  
Gen. 21. 15, 16.  
Hoc apud He-  
braeos exiit in  
proverbium: ut  
si quando in  
angustia consti-  
tuti sumus &  
Domini operant  
auxilio sublevari  
dicent in monte;  
Dominum vide-  
bit, hoc est sicut  
Abrahae miseri-  
tus est miseri-  
surus & nostris.

Hieron. in  
quest. Hebr.  
Gen. 22. 14.  
Exod. 2. 3.

And because examples are great encouragements as well of faith as obedience, since as we are incited to doe what others have done, so we are animated to hope what others have experienced before us: give me leave to mind you of several instances in the book of God, which evidence the truth of this comfortable assertion.

Were not Hagar and her Sonne in a perishing estate, when turned out of Abrahams house into a dry wilderness, onely with a little bread, and a bottle of water, nay, when the bottle was empty and none to replenish? Now it is that Hagar giveth her selfe, and her childe, for lost, leaving him under a bush, that she might not heare him cry, nor see his death, and resolving to spend the little remainder of her owne dayes in teares. But loe, when at this pinch an Angel appeareth, openeth her eyes, and instead of a bottle she hath a well full of water for her owne and her Sons preservation.

Was not Isaac nigh to death, when bound hand and foot, yea, laid upon the Altar? nay, his Fathers hand stretched forth to take his knife and cut his throat; it is but a little while, and one stroake had let out blood and life together. But see, in the mount of the Lord it is scene, *Id est in univ. God*, as it were from an ambush, calls unexpectedly from heaven, and by a word in season at once stops the Fathers hand, and saves the Childes life.

In what great danger of death was Moses, when his parents laid

laid him by the rivers brinke with no other shelter but an arke of bulrushes: how likely is this helpless Babe to be starved with cold, or tumble into the river, or be devoured with a wild beast? But behold, whilest the child is in this imminent danger, and the parents in perplexing feare, providence so ordereth it, that Pharaoh's daughter becometh as a mother to the child, and the childes mother is appointed to be his nurse, whereby his life is preserved.

How nigh in all probability was the Israelites destruction, when before them a Sea, through which there could be no wading, on either side mountaines, over which there was no climbing, behinde them a mighty host, with whom there is no contesting, and yet from whom no meanes left of escaping. But loe, in this depth of misery God hath mercy on them, even to a miracle; the sea divideth, and at once becometh the Israelites passage, and Egyptians grave.

How small did the distance seeme betweene Jonah and death, when the mercifull marriners were enforced for saving their owne lives to cast him into the mercilesse Sea, and yet there he sturketh not, a divine hand as it were holding him by the chinne, when in the Sea swallowed by a greedy Whale, and there hee dyeth not; God would not deliver him from the tempest, he will from the Whale; that which was most likely to consume him becometh the means to preserve him, within three dayes the Whale delivereth him safe, whole, and alive upon dry ground.

Who ever thought to have seene those three worthies alive after they fell downe bound into the midst of a fiery burning furnace? But behold a martyrdome effected without dying, whilest a fourth like the Sonne of God appeareth, at whose command the fire forgetteth to burne, or so much as scorch.

Who did not expect but that Daniel being cast into a denne of ravenous Lions, should be devoured before the next morning, the next houre? But see, the Lyons mouthes are stopped by an Angel, and since they cannot feed Daniel, are forced to keep a fast with him.

Were not Paul and his company in great jeopardy of death, when the thick clouds had for many dayes obscured the light of

Quid mirabile  
in coniungere  
potuit illa, qua  
cum dolore pue-  
rum exposuerat,  
nunc cum gaudio  
eum recipit.

Fer. Com.

Exod. 2. 8.

Exod. 14. 21.

Aque qua time-  
bantur dextrā  
laevāq; famulis  
dei murus effe-  
ctae, non solum  
perniciem nesci-  
unt, sed et mu-  
nimen exhibent.

Orig. hom. in  
Exod.

Pasce ex susti-  
nuit absorberi  
Jonam a cetis  
non ut absorbe-  
retur & in  
totum periret, sed  
ut evomitus ma-  
gis subigeretur  
Deo, & plus  
glorificaretur  
qui insperabi-  
lem salutem ei  
donasset.

1. 2. ad v. h. 2.

1. 3. c. 22.

O martyrium &  
sine passione per-  
fectum, satis passi  
satis exultis

sunt, quos prop-  
terea D. m. texit,  
ne potestatem  
eius mentiri vi-  
deremur Tertul.

Scorp. cap. 8.

Veni Leo &

Sun l. beavit leonem

ab ore koris:  
Rabin. Lap.  
super loc.

Ὁ σὸν χαλὰ  
τὴν φύσιν τῆς  
πνεύματος  
ἀπώλοντο

ἐν ἀλλ' ὁ θεός  
ἐκώλυσεν.

Chryl. in A&.

Quod genus  
morbi & nature  
vires attinet  
profusus esset  
mortuus nisi  
singulari dei  
consilio servare-  
tur. Musc. in  
loc.

Solo jussu saluti  
reddidit qui vo-  
luntate omnia  
creavit. Greg.  
Mag. in Evan.  
hom. 28.

Post certamina  
desperata medi-  
corum: post medi-  
camina sumptu-  
osa, post inane  
& antiquissimā  
curam ubi ars et  
pericia dese erat  
jam curantium

ubi languetis  
omnis jam con-  
sumpta fuerat  
substantia ipsi  
auctori reveren-  
dum viduus non  
casu sed divini-  
tus occurrit, ut  
quod humana  
arte tot annis  
curari non potu-

*San* and *Starres* from them, the violent stormes exceedingly tossed the *Ship*, enforced them to cast out the goods, yea, every moment they expect themselves to be made a prey to the roring waves, all hope that they should be saved being taken away? but behold, that night an Angell of God standeth by Paul, and from God assures him of his and their preservation.

To come yet nearer to the instance of the Text:

It was no slight sicknesse afflicted David, when he said, *My heart panteth, my strength faileth me; as for the light of mine eyes it is gone from me; the disease (it seemeth) had seized upon all his spirits, his animals in the dimnesse of his eyes, his natural in the failing of his strength, his vitall in the panting of his heart; and surely then it must needs bring him very nigh to death; yea, it seemeth David feared it, which made him so earnestly pray against it in another Psalm: But when death is near, God is neare too, hearing his prayer, and preserving his life.*

It is said of Hezekiah, that he was sick unto death, the disease was such that he reckoned his bones should be broken, and an end made of him, yea, he received a sentence of death from God by the Prophet, *Set thine house in order, for thou shalt dye and not live: But that threat was onely like Abrahams precept, not a declaration of what God intended to doe, but onely a probation to try what Hezekiah would doe; and therefore notwithstanding the disease was deadly, God becometh his Physitian, prescribeth a plaister of figgs, and Hezekiah is healed.*

The Centurions Sonne is visited with a Feaver; that Feaver bringeth him to the very point of death, when as at the Centurions intreaty, Christ with a word commands his recovery.

That womans condition was desperate, when she was at once brought low in estate and body: her goods are gone, her disease contineth, the Physitians have emptied her purse, but cannot stay her flux, nor is there any likelyhood but that this sickness will at length bring her to her grave. But her deplorable state is a fit occasion for Christ to magnifie his mercy, whilest by a believing touch of his garment he maketh her perfectly whole.

Finally, Martha sends Christ word that Lazarus is sick; Christ delayeth to come, onely lets her know this sicknesse should be



be for Gods glory: being sick he dyeth, dying is buried, and having been some dayes buried he rotteth, nay stinketh in the grave; and now is the time come for Christ by his powerfull voice to raise him from the sleep of death; and bed of the grave.

Loe here, more than a fury of textuall witnesses, to which many more might be added (besides this in the Text) all asserting this truth, and thereby assuring our faith of Gods deliverance in the worst extremity. To all which give me leave to addle one more, even my owne late experience of Gods marvailous kindenesse vouchsafed to me.

It is not many weekes agoe since it pleased the wise God to visit me with a sore and violent Feaver; that Feaver so exhausted my spirits, and enervated my body, that I might well take up Davids expression, *There was but a step betweene me and death*: Much about that time when the dayes of the yeare are at the longest, the dayes of my life seemed to be at the shortest. Thus was the first part of this Text verified, *I was sick nigh to death*; indeed so nigh, that I was as a dead man in the opinion of the learned, yea, actually dead and buried in the report of the vulgar, and truly I had ere this beene not onely foure dayes with Lazarus, but more than four weekes putrifying in the grave, had not divine goodnesse prevented: But God had mercy on me, and so the other part of my Text is likewise fulfilled: when the sicknesse had almost weighed me downe into the pit, God was pleased to put a graine of mercy and turne the scale, so that I am here (beloved) this day, before God, Angels, and men, as a bird escaped out of a strong snare, as a prey plucked out of the jaws of a devouring Lion, as a brand snatched out of the fire of a burning feaver.

What therefore remaineth, but that as in the beginning, so now in the close of this discourse I take up a gratulation, Bless the Lord oh my soul, and let all that is within me praise his holy name; when I forget to mention this deliverance, let my right hand forget its cunning; when I cease (as opportunity offereth it selfe) to publish this mercy, let my tongue cleave to the roose of my month; nor yet would I be alone, in this work of praise; do you (all you here present) joyne with me. I doubt not but many, the most,

it, sola fide & humilitate curaretur. Chrysol. Serm. 33.

Videtur quem admodum dat locum mori, licentiam dat sepulchro, corruptioni posse permittit, negat nil pot. edini, nil fore hori: atque ut Tartarus rapiat, irabatur, habeat, admittit, atque agit, ut humana spes tota peccat, et tota vultumina na desperationis accedat, quatenus quod facturus est divinum sit, non humanum. Chrysol. serm. 63.

1 Sam 20. 3. June the 10. my disease was at the highest.

Psal. 103. 1. 137. 5, 6.

nay

2 Cor. I. 11.

Psal. 72. 18, 19.

may all of you in some kind, at some time or other, have had experience of eminent deliverances: oh call them now to mind, & let your gratefull remembrance come up as a memoriall before the Lord: I doubt not but many of you, yea, very many, did put up prayers, fervent prayers at the throne of grace for this mercy (which I now celebrate) my recovery. Indeed brethren, I look upon my health, as S. Paul on his preservation, as a gift bestowed on me by the meanes (to wit, for the sakes and prayers) of many; and surely as prayers have been made, so fit it is thanksgiving should be returned by many on my behalfe, it were a shame to be zealous in begging and cold in blessing; to cry aloud give us our daily bread, and onely whisper hallowed be thy name. Blessed therefore be the Lord God of his unworthy servant, who alone doth wondrous things; yea, blessed be his glorious name for ever, and let all that have been petitioners for me say with me at least in their hearts, Amen, Amen.

And now my Dearly beloved Parishioners, and freinds in the Lord, what is my desire, but that you may have cause in allusion to the following words of this verse, to say, God had mercy, not on him onely, but us also; that my preservation may be for your edification, as well for my consolation: that you, who have already found benefit by my weak Ministry, may be more strengthened; and those, who have heretofore been unprofitable, may now be bettered. Which that it may be so, it shall be my endeavour: let it be your prayer for me, that I may doe the works of Christ more diligently and faithfully than ever; it shall be my prayer for you, let it be your endeavour to heare the word of Christ more attentively and obediently for the time to come. So shall you have cause to blesse God for me, and I to blesse God for you. Yea at that last and great day you shall have joy in me, if my preaching become a means of your conversion and salvation; and I shall have joy in you, whose conversion and salvation shall prove an increase of my reward, and an addition to my glorie. Which God grant, &c.

E I N I S.